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INFO EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEHC/DEPT OF LABOR WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANAGUA 001057

SIPDIS
STATE PASS TO MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION
AMEMBASSY BERLIN PASS TO AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMEMBASSY BERLIN PASS TO AMCONSUL LEIPZIG
AMEMBASSY ATHENS PASS TO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019/11/02
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [NU](#)
SUBJECT: FSLN Beat, Kidnap Opposition Youth in Leon

REF: A) MANAGUA 1049; B) MANAGUA 1035; C) MANAGUA 836; D) MANAGUA 794

MANAGUA 00001057 001.2 OF 002

CLASSIFIED BY: RobertJ.Callahan, Ambassador, State, Embassy Managua;
REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C) Summary: On October 29, members of the governing FSLN (some with ties to the Leon City Hall) beat, briefly kidnapped, and interrogated

FSLN Beats, Kidnaps and Interrogates Opposition Youth; Police Involvement?

¶2. (C) In the days following the CSJ's ruling allowing Ortega's re-election (ref B), youth groups in Leon responded by spray-painting "no re-election for Ortega" throughout the city. Many of these youth are affiliated or support the Sandinista Renewal Movement (MRS), a left-of-center political movement that opposes Ortega's governing Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). According to MRS Department President Nicolas Palacios, since the MRS youth began their public demonstrations against Ortega's re-election, FSLN departmental members began following the youth. On October 29, FSLN members in two vehicles stopped and attacked Eduardo Santos (23 years old) and Pompilio Miranda (26 years old). Santos is a member of the civil society group Movimiento por Nicaragua, but has participated in MRS activities. Miranda is a leader of the MRS departmental youth group. The vehicles used to stop the young men were a taxi known to be at the service of the Leon City Hall (run by the FSLN) and the other was a pick-up belonging to the FSLN departmental headquarters.

¶3. (C) Approximately 10 men were in the two vehicles. They stopped Santos and Miranda, sprayed the two young men with pepper spray, then attacked them physically. Residents in the area came to Santos' and Miranda's rescue and provided them temporary refuge in a local store. The residents then took Santos to the city hospital. As Miranda left the local store, the FSLN members again began to follow him, at which point Miranda sought refuge in an empty restaurant. The FSLN members entered the restaurant, attacked Miranda, then placed him in the pick-up and took him to the FSLN departmental headquarters. At the FSLN offices, the governing party's militants again attacked Miranda and interrogated him on who was supporting the youth group's campaign against Ortega. After approximately two hours, the FSLN militants placed Miranda in the bed of the pick-up and paraded him around town as a symbol to other would-be opposition members. The FSLN militants eventually dumped Miranda off at the police station where City Hall employees were filing charges against Miranda for defacing public property. (Note: Per ref C, this is in contrast to FSLN youth who have placed pro-Ortega graffiti throughout Managua and Leon, but against whom the government has filed no charges.)

¶4. (C) According to Miranda, police were present at the FSLN headquarters when he was taken there. Palacios notes that the police regularly pr

Comment

¶5. (C) While the unified political opposition continues to deliberate on how best to address Ortega's direct assaults on Nicaragua's democracy, some in Nicaragua continue to publicly demonstrate their opposition to the government's authoritarian tactics. As a result, the governing FSLN continues to physically respond to any form of opposition as it has repeatedly in the past (ref A, D). This latest attack, however, is of particular concern due to the kidnapping and interrogation tactics the FSLN employed. Equally concerning is the police's direct awareness, or perhaps involvement, in the incident.
CALLAHAN